ness. This is certainly an interesting suggestion, for on May 28, at the snow line on the Jade Mountains, as before stated, the males were still in white plumage, except the useful transocular black."

In speaking of the Willow Ptarmigan, he says that late in the fall of 1898, before any snow had fallen, he found "these white birds very conspicuous wherever they were." They were also then very shy, but later, after the snow came, "would allow of a much closer approach, but were correspondingly difficult to discover." When the sky was overcast with a dense haze, he says, obscuring the direct rays of the sun, but with an intense even light, the Ptarmigan "were extremely hard to distinguish against the blank whiteness of the landscape. Only some movement of the black bill or eye could betray their presence, and often I have unknowingly approached the birds on the snow within a few yards .... But on a clear day, when the sun shines unobstructedly, even white objects are brought out in relief by their dark shadows. The Ptarmigan are then discernible for several hundred yards."

Speaking of the moult of this species he says: "The male Willow Ptarmigan thus undergoes at least three distinct moults during the year, though but one of these, that in the fall, is complete,"—a pleasing confirmation of Dr. Dwight's recent conclusion from a study of museum specimens (Auk, XVII, p. 163). Notwithstanding Mr. Grinnell's study of these birds in the field, from fresh specimens, throughout the year, it ought to be a suggestive fact to those who believe that Ptarmigan change color without moult that Mr. Grinnell makes no reference to such a change, but ascribes the seasonal changes of color to moult, and has the hardihood to point out just how they take place.

Mr. Grinnell considers the Alaskan Spruce Partridge as inseparable from the Labrador form (*Canachites canadensis labradorius* Bangs). The Alaskan form of the Northern Shrike is here separated as a new subspecies, under the name *Lanius borealis invictus*.

The Cooper Ornithological Club is to be congratulated upon having secured so interesting and valuable a paper as Mr. Grinnell's 'Birds of the Kotzebue Sound Region' as their opening article for their new 'Pacific Coast Avifauna' series.—J. A. A.

'Sharpe's' Hand List of the Genera and Species of Birds,' Vol. II.—In 'The Auk' for January, 1900 (pp. 79–81), we had the pleasure of calling attention to the first volume of this indispensable work. We then stated so fully the character of the work that we have now merely to chronicle the appearance of Volume II [1] and briefly state its scope. The first volume included the orders I–XXVII of Dr. Sharpe's classification, or all the members of the class, living and extinct, from the Saururæ to the end of the Strigiformes. The present volume records the Psittaci

[1] Volume II, London, 1900. 8vo, pp. i–xxv+1–312.

and what are known generally as 'Picarian' birds, or Sharpe's Orders XXVIII–XXXIII, the Woodpeckers standing at the end of the series as a 'suborder' Pici of his Piciformes. According to statistics given in the preface, Volume II includes 454 genera and 2861 species, making for the two volumes 1284 genera and 6487 species. Compared with Gray's 'Hand list' of 1871, we have an estimated increase of about 500 genera and 1500 species during the thirty years that have passed since the publication of Gray's work.

Dr. Sharpe calls attention to his having "reverted to the old-fashioned name of *Cypselus* for the Swifts, instead of *Apus* of Scopoli," affirming: "For my own part I gladly accept any excuse which restores such a well-known name as *Cypselus*." His excuse is that Scopoli used the name *Apos* for a group of Crustacea in the same work in which he employed *Apus* for the Swifts, *Apos* also having some 80 pages precedence. Although doubtless words of wholly different origin, their 'correct' latinization, it is claimed, would give the same form, *Apus*, for both. But the two names were not thus written originally, and were enough different in form to give no real inconvenience. It is here, as in so many other cases, only the 'emendation' rule that gives rise to trouble. But Dr. Sharpe would even go further, and, citing the case of *Pica* and *Picus*, says, "but I think that even in this case it may perhaps be better to suppress *Pica* as the generic name of the Magpies;" yet, in speaking of *Cypselus*, a few lines later, he says, "and I can only regret that equally good reasons cannot be found to replace some of the old-fashioned generic names which recent research proves to have been antedated." Although *Pica* comes into the category of "old-fashioned generic names," we fear its fate when our author reaches it in the 'Hand-list.'—J. A. A.

Dubois's 'Synopsis Avium.'—Since our notice of Part I of this useful work (Auk, XVII, p. 81), Parts II, III and IV[1] have appeared, carrying the work to p. 288 and pl. vi. Part II contains the Pici, Heterodactylæ, Amphibolæ, Anisodactylæ, and Macrochires; Part III, the Macrochires, Tracheophonæ, and Oligomyodæ; Part IV, the Tyrannidæ, Hirundinidæ, Ampelidæ, Paramythiidæ, and part of the Muscicapidæ. The number of genera thus far treated is 747, and the number of species, 4014, with 909 additional subspecies. As shown by the names of the groups just cited, the nomenclature of the higher groups is very different from that employed in the British Museum 'Hand-List,' and the method of treatment is also quite different, Dubois's 'Synopsis' being closely modelled after Gray's 'Hand-list'; but it gives fuller references, and being well brought down to date, will prove a most helpful manual of reference for all workers in systematic ornithology. We are glad to see the work

[1] Facicule II, 1900, pp. 81–160, pl. ii; Fascicule III, 1900, pp. 161–224, pll. iii and iv; Fascicule IV, 1900, pp. 225–288, pll. v and vi.